AP US History

Chapter 13 Questions

1. Describe the debate over the annexation of Texas.

The debate was about why annexation was good and bad. It began when the Mexican government had allowed American migrants to settle in Texas to increase their tax revenues, but there were more Americans than Mexicans very soon. The Americans in Texas wanted either a peaceful settlement in Texas, but others had wanted independence from the Mexican government. In the later stages war had broken out, the Mexican government sent a general and an army to stop any more American revolts, but later the American government had sent their general and he (with his army) defeated Mexican forces and won Texas. The debate had two sides, one was the supporters of expansion in the US (and the South) and the other side was the North. The South had wanted the annexation of Texas because they would have gained more power in Congress since Texas was to be admitted as a slave state. The North had opposed the annexation of Texas for that reason, that the South would gain more power. The decision was that the annexation of Texas would not occur, they tried again, but the North had prevented that as well.

1. What was the process by which Texas and California joined the United States (include your evaluation of the tactics involved)?

Texas had joined the US after failed attempts, only joined after the president had approved of it, he was the first president who had bothered to deal with the slavery issue; every other president had purposely avoided the issue during their presidency. Before, even though the Americans had won their independence in Texas, they applied to join the senate, but the past presidents and the North had prevented the annexation of Texas. Basically the tactics were support of an idea (manifest destiny) and appeal to the power of the U.S., the two tactics were pretty good, but due to a powerful objection, these tactics were worthless; also used slavery as a tactic (popular to the South). For California, they had joined the Union after the Compromise of 1850 which was repeatedly rejected by the old Congress until there were new members. Some members had supported this, some famous figures, such as Webster; so they had use popular figures to influence this choice. Another tactic, was that they had included in the compromise things appealing to the North and South, though I taught effective was shot down at first.

1. Describe the changing landscape of American politics in the middle of the 19th century (include the new questions being debated, political party developments, key individuals).

The landscape of American politics focused on mostly about slavery, more importantly, it was sectional now. Some new questions were that how could they keep balance of the North and South could be possible, should they let more states in the Union, and how were they going to decide what territories will be what; all of these were focused on slavery. A new political party had risen, the Free-Soil Party, where they would do something about the slavery issue unlike their rivals, though they lost, they were the first to try and do something about this. Some important people during this time were Van Buren (presidential candidate of the Free-Soil Party), Henry Clay (proposed the Compromise of 1850, to try to keep the nation together), and Taylor (president during this time, he tried to prevent the annexation of CA and TX).

1. What the hell happened in Kansas?

What the “hell” was basically political turmoil. It all started out by the Kansas-Nebraska Act, where white settlers from the North and the South came into Kansas. Next popular sovereignty was to take place, but the South had “cheated”, they brought a lot of Missourians, which were pro-slavery, which meant Kansas was forced to become a slave state. The North had reacted by creating another government in Kansas that was anti-slavery, where President Pierce branded them as traitors, and where the pro-slavery Kansas citizens arrested were happily to oblige in the capture of them. Unfortunately, they got out of control-they sacked the town, burned down houses, and destroyed several printing presses. This had caused an angry reaction by abolitionists, John Brown had lured a few pro-slavery settlers, and with his own followers, he had killed them. This had later caused another reaction, in Congress itself, Preston Brooks had violently beat up Charles Summer with a heavy cane.

1. Assess this statement: the election of James Buchanan caused the Civil War.

No, I don’t agree with this statement, about ten percent is what I thought about this, during his presidency-he had helped cause the civil war, but eventually the Civil War would have happened one way or another. The tensions were already so high, they would have just snapped at any rate, the issue of slavery could not survive if there were opposite sides. During his presidency, he had never actually started the Civil War but helped cause some things that increased the tensions. There was a depression that led the North to believe that the South was the cause of it, the ruling of *Dred Scott* led to the defeat of abolitionists, where more tensions had been made, Kansas remained an internal conflict over slavery, until the end of his presidency and even worse John Brown’s raid had caused a major problem-all of these events were during his presidency and they all helped separate the nation. Overall the Civil War was not caused by just one person, it was the ideas of the nations (over slavery).